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THE CHURCHES IN ACTION

NEWS LETTER

OF THE

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR LIFE AND WORK

AND THE

WORLD ALLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES

The above-mentioned organisations are not officially responsible for the opinions expressed in this News Letter
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THE OECUMENICAL TASK

A Call of God to Churches and Nations

The nations are in the grip of an unprecedented tension. Tremendous tasks lie before them, upon the accomplishment or non-accomplishment of which their very existence will, as never before, depend. In this time of world strain, the oecumenical movement claims to be a herald to the universal Church of Christ. Just as, under God's guidance, the foreign missions spread the good news, with its message for all men, now on this front and now on that, so the expansive force of the Christian doctrine implies also a permanent missionary task in the professedly Christian countries and in the Churches themselves. In obedience to God, the oecumenical movement must respond to this missionary call. It is no matter of the personal keenness of individuals, nor of a single, incidental task for the Churches. The oecumenical movement stands, rather, for the rediscovery of a genuinely missionary responsibility on the part of Christendom. A sacred obligation inspired those men who first heard the call and who devoted their whole lives to it. A sacred obligation consolidates the oecumenical movement into one front against the united forces of evil.

But the movement is also a fulfilment. In it the longed for manifestation of unity among the faithful takes visible form. Here Christian fellowship finds expression in the midst of the diversity of Churches. Here the God-given life of faith finds practical realisation in the life of men and nations. And it is a reality, not, perhaps, actively in evidence, but based on the confession of repentance that forms the character and the secret driving power of the oecumenical movement. The movement itself is the sign of that genuine repentance which creates new strength and enthusiasm : repentance for the self-isolation of the churches and peoples from each other and for the weak or self-satisfied aloofness from the distresses of the world. As long as this fundamental awareness, this inward crisis, remains the lasting characteristic of the oecumenical movement, the Church Universal achieves reality, judging, transforming and blessing all other realities in the name of God. Wherever this state of mind exists, it indicates a repentance first of all for the shortcomings of the movement itself. Hence the hour of the present crisis is, for oecumenism, the hour in which it must rid itself of any trace of secular internationalism, and in which it must proclaim that anything based on a purely human or private motive, or on one in which political or other aims are concealed, will come to nothing, and only that which is genuinely Christian in origin will prevail. Under the pressure of the present tensions and responsibilities, mere secular internationalism breaks down. Its conception of man is too optimistic. Bound by illusion, it fails to recognise the diabolical possibilities in human nature, or the conflicting forces of the process of history. The Church must therefore now proclaim its message more urgently than

ever, in the face of the conflict of peoples and races, of classes and states. In the present setback to international cooperation, the oecumenical movement calls to its supporters and opponents alike : In the present international distress, from which there seems no way out, the ultimate spiritual foundations of all international cooperation and the will and promise of God in the history of the nations must be sought. Beset with the tremendous reawakening of nationalism, the oecumenical movement utters a warning that all ruthless self-isolation, all precautions of a national character, will in the end give no security. In the light of the universality of the Church of Christ, all national and racial selfishness are seen in their true colours. In this hour of crisis, the oecumenical movement summons the Churches to proclaim the universal message to all classes and nations, with new strength and courage, with new joy and authority from God.

Anyone who realises the great possibilities before the Churches at the present time must be aware of the hidden blessing of God as it operated during the course of last year in the oecumenical movement. In quite unexpected ways, barriers between the various groups disappeared. Faith and Order, Life and Work, the World Alliance, the International Missionary Council and the international Christian Youth organisations came together, on an international scale and, to a certain extent, nationally as well, in joint activity and plans. The earnest reconsideration of the very foundations of the œcumenical mission, a reconsideration which had already begun during past years, gained new impetus. Within the Stockholm Movement, the whole study and discussion of the problem of social order led to a definition of the Christian attitude to the present day conceptions of social and economic order, and so contributed to future social reconstruction. The examination of the conditions necessary for the true world order came more and more to the front in the activities of the World Alliance, and was particularly productive of results in the joint work of the youth leaders of all the oecumenical groups. Faith and Order concentrated its whole work on the fundamental questions relating to the Church Universal. In the International Missionary Council, the study undertaken regarding the far-reaching effects of modern industrialism on native life has created important facilities for bringing the Christian influence to bear on the structural changes in native community life.

But of still greater importance is the concentration of all oecumenical effort on the one great task which will take a central place in future work — Nation and World Order before God. Clearly recognising the urgent need for a thorough Christian discussion of the problems involved, the Stockholm Movement has prepared the ground for this joint oecumenical undertaking, through a deliberate direction of its whole study and research work towards the problem of the State. The World Alliance has cooperated in this programme, and its representatives are already taking part in national Church conferences on the State problem, which are preceding the oecumenical study conference of this year. Faith and Order has taken up the question of the Christian conception of the State as the point on which its theological studies shall hinge. Within the Christian Youth movements, a really Christian understanding of nationalism and of the race problem is being eagerly pursued. Thus the efforts of all the groups within the oecumenical movement are converging on this basic problem, within a Christian philosophy of life.

In the face of this great task, the question emerges anew : Can it become a reality ? One thing is certain. God, and He alone, can give the answer. But we may be sure that He will answer all those who obey His call in earnestness, all who take part in the common rethinking of this problem, all who, being ready to make sacrifices in the fulfilment of this oecumenical mission, turn to Him in prayer and, in full confidence, leave the way and the outcome of oecumenical endeavour in His hands.

H. L. H.

LIFE AND WORK

Church, State and World Order.

The preparations for the oecumenical study conference on the problem of the Church and the State of Today[1] have made good progress since last reported upon. Study Committees formed by the Churches in Czecho-Slovakia, England, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America have undertaken, on the basis of the material and suggestions supplied by the Research Department, to work out the conception of the State peculiar to each of these Churches. Previous experience of preparatory work and conferences indicates that a fundamental clarification of such questions as are here involved is the best way to arrive at an opinion common to all Churches, and so to lay the foundations

[1] See The Churches in Action. No. 3. Pages 4/5.

for genuinely oecumenical thinking and action. In addition to these study committees, a Russian Orthodox study group in Paris will also take up the subject and, in accordance with the resolutions of the Orthodox study conference in Bucarest in May last, study conferences on this same subject are also being planned by the Orthodox Churches in Bulgaria, Greece, Jugo-Slavia and Roumania.

In view of the particular urgency of the problem, the whole work will be concentrated first and foremost on the problem of inter-state relations, with a view to defining, from the Church's point of view, in what precisely its whole responsibilities and tasks consist for the present world situation. Besides the problem that is presented by inter-state relations, attention will be given to the question of the relations of the State to the people, a fundamental discussion of which is now imposed upon the Churches as a special task more clearly than ever.

The Church and the Godless Movement.

A special resolution was adopted at the Orthodox study conference of Bucarest, according to which the Research Department of the Universal Christian Council was asked to make a study of the Godless Movement and to supply the Churches regularly with material on the subject. A preliminary survey on its scope and developments is to be found in the special report *The Church and the Godless Movement.* In addition to examining the widespread exterior measures undertaken for its propagation, the report aims at surveying the principal literature relating to the philosophic foundations of the Godless Movement, since a thorough grasp of these is essential to any genuine attempt to overcome it. In this connexion, the influences that emerge in the field of modern industrialism are of particular importance, not only those that are present in the great industrial countries, but those also that find their way from there into the agrarian countries of the Balkans. The report also analyses the driving intellectual forces belonging to the Marxian-Communistic theory of economics, which are finding expression in the Godless Movement. From the reports and studies in question, the immense responsibility of the Churches becomes increasingly clear: If they cannot prove their power to form and maintain true fellowship, and thus create a definite basis for the solution of the great spiritual and social problems which are now before them, then the danger is more and more evident that the longings and hopes for liberation from all that tends to destroy this sense of fellowship will seek their fulfilment in the Godless Movement. Of particular significance are the reports on the experiences of the Churches and the Christian organisations in their contacts with the Godless Movement, as well as with the sources from which it sprang and on which it continues to draw.

* * *

In connexion with the forthcoming oecumenical study conference on " The Church and the State of Today ", the Research Department is preparing, for use by study groups, a **special report dealing with recent literature on political ethics.** The report will survey general present-day tendencies and problems that arise in the discussion, from the Christian point of view, on the question of politics and State, and will include quotations from important contributions. The first section of the report will deal with the efforts made to lay theological foundations, with a view to indicating the starting points for a critical treatment of the subject. In subsequent sections, some of the more important problems covered by the literature in question will be discussed, such as the character and tasks of the State, the nature of its authority and its limitations in relation to the individual and to the Church, the Christian conception of nationalism and of internationalism, etc. To the report will be added a detailed list of literature on theology and on the philosophy of the State, which may be obtained through the Research Department.[1]

Refugees from Germany.

Mr. James G. McDonald, High Commissioner of the League of Nations for Refugees coming from Germany, has established his headquarters at Lausanne. In addition to the services of an international governing body, the High Commissioner is assisted by an advisory committee, composed of representatives of Jewish and of other organisations, among them the Universal Christian Council and the Central Office for Inter-Church Aid. Jewish organisations in countries adjacent to Germany, in the United States and in Great Britain have already expended large sums to meet the immediate needs of refugees, and their help has not been restricted to those of their own race. But the whole problem of the relief, retraining and settlement of these refugees cannot be solved

[1] The Research Department is willing to mention further books on the above subjects (especially those from French and Anglo-American sources) and would be glad to receive review copies.

except by international cooperation between Governments, supported by public opinion and liberality. For the appeal contemplated by the High Commissioner, he has already been assured of the hearty support of a number of Governments and of private organisations. Following the decision adopted at Novi Sad, several of the Churches affiliated to the Universal Christian Council have already taken steps, in close cooperation with Mr. McDonald, to help meet the immediate needs of destitute refugees. An appeal signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and by the leaders of the Free Churches has been circulated in Great Britain. A similar appeal, issued over the signatures of the President and other leaders of the Universal Christian Council has also been sent to the Churches affiliated to it on the European Continent. Contributions to the British appeal may still be sent to : The Rev. H. W. Fox, (C/o German Refugees Assistance Fund), 232 Abbey House, Westminster) ; and to the Continental appeal to : The Rev. H.-L. Henriod, 2, rue de Montchoisy, Geneva. The distribution of funds will be made through existing relief organisations, as recommended by the High Commissioner. Attention will be given to the needs of Hebrew Christians.

WORLD ALLIANCE

THE CHURCH AND THE PEACE OF THE WORLD.

The great questions that are disturbing the minds of men and women everywhere, as the New Year begins, because they menace peace, are in the domain of conflicts of the will. The nations are still in the phase of working out the settlement of problems which arose out of the World War. Fifteen years after its close, they are ranged in groups that can be clearly defined : First, those satisfied with the peace treaties and desiring to maintain their positions and retain their holdings as established by the treaty terms ; second, those dissatisfied with the treaties (both vanquished and victors) and desiring to modify their positions for the better and either to regain some lost holdings or to gain new ones ; third, those uninterested or uninvolved directly in the treaties and expressing no view as to whether they should be maintained or modified, but all concerned in the general interest of order and peace. It is unnecessary here to discuss in any detail the individual contentions and controversies, all too familiar, created by the relations and situations of the peoples in those three groups, but only to emphasize the fact that they constitute issues of feeling and volition rather than issues of a practical or technical order. Their solution lies in the realm of psychological or spiritual forces. Differences in administrative or executive methods or in legislative principles or even social organization, and the disputes due to them, are comparatively easy to adjust. It is when differences concern the self-interest and the self-respect either of an individual, a family, a community or a country, that they are difficult to compose. It is here that the Churches have a special part to play.

For the lesser conflicts of interest, prestige and will, between nations, the orderly methods of arbitration, conciliation or court decision are most often accepted. But for the larger conflicts of " national honour " and " vital concern " there has generally been no solution so far save war. This is particularly true as between powerful states, and consequently the more perilous. Others, less able to take matters into their own hands and more subject to diplomatic influence, may have to acquiesce in neutral settlements by third parties ; but the Great Powers do not, and strife between them threatens everyone else. They are the potential disturbers of the world's peace.

This domain of conflicts of the will appears as the natural and peculiar domain of the Churches. Offering an answer to the doubts and fears of men and women which claims to supersede and transcend human values, it is their business to deal with the heart and spirit of the individual. Despite objections which may be raised on the political plane, their duty would appear to be evidently also to deal with the heart and spirit of nations and to intercede with their rulers in this sense. Even as an individual who accepts life as a mystery unexplained and as a hazard to be taken on that basis, one must say that it is in the Churches that one would expect to find an accord in regard to the problem of solutions for conflicts of the will. Elsewhere, there can be only the gradual growth of the human intelligence in its quest for truth among the uncertainties that surround it. But there, one would look for agreement in the assertion that trial by combat has proved itself to be, for men and nations, a matter of more grave concern to them and to others than any question to be settled by it. One would await a firm insistence instead upon trial by debate, the only

alternative, as the right course of honour and of interest. Further, one would hope for resolute protest against the stupidity of a method for settling disputes which cannot assure justice — much less mercy. So one would listen for the voice of the Churches demanding that any and every question between nations — even those concerning treaties — must be submitted to impartial decision by disinterested judges or mediators, rather than to the blind arbitrament of arms. This they might advocate as the sole basis and justification for the use of regulatory force in international life, except against actual invasion, as it is for the use of police force in civil life. The redress of wrong must be a concern deep in the conscience of the Churches, looking out upon the world into which we are moving in 1934, together with the reinforcement of right. " The strength of all for the safety of each " is a persuasive phrase frequently used in reference to those institutions of international order which have been brought into existence so far, but a more far-reaching and reforming one might be " The might of all for the right of each ". At least it would embody both the ideas of reinforcement of right and redress of wrong, not always emphasized alike in claims either of equality or security. Combined, the two principles might afford a more firm foundation for the structure of world peace. They both imply and indeed impose agreement not to use force in conflicts of the will. This is the central issue at stake in the effort for disarmament.

Here the Churches face an immediate opportunity and responsibility. They have done much, but the sharpest trial is ahead. The test is coming, and probably is close at hand, as to whether there shall be a convention for disarmament or whether there shall be no convention. This test may take on a variety of forms, but its essential meaning will always be the same. For all who denounce and distrust trial by combat, the conclusion is clear : No convention for disarmament at all, with the insecurities and risks of an attempt to perpetuate the state of affairs under existing treaties, means more peril for the nations than a convention of some sort, even an inadequate and unsatisfactory one, which all the Powers might be engaged to support. But an inadequate and unsatisfactory convention, involving no considerable disarmament and consequently considerable rearmament, might well be as difficult to negotiate as an adequate and satisfactory convention providing for genuine disarmament and consequently against rearmament. The first objective, therefore, is a convention for real reduction in armaments, as the general and individual interest of all concerned as well as their highest honour. This implies not only the beginning of further disarmament. It implies more. It stands for a changed order in the world, under which the nations large and small may have recourse to a better judge than their own strength for the adjustment of their conflicts and the appeasement of their hatreds. It is an outward sign of that spirit of which the Churches are symbols. If not they, then who else has the obligation to proclaim it ?

Malcolm Waters Davis.[1]

HERE AND THERE.

We have received news from Holland that at their Annual Meeting held on December 1st delegates of five Youth organisations were invited to form a national branch of the International Youth Commission of the World Alliance and Life and Work. It is expected that this national youth commission will organise a holiday house or a study conference in Holland next summer.

Peace Sunday was celebrated in Holland on December 10th and a Message issued by the Dutch Council was read from the pulpits and published in the newspapers. The Message was also broadcast.

An oecumenical service was held in Utrecht and the interest of church people was so great that the Church was not large enough to contain all the people who wished to attend.

At the Via della Cento Stelle 78, Florence, an International Student Club has recently been opened, under the direction of Dr. Cesare Gay. Dr. Gay invites students of all countries coming to Florence to avail themselves of the services of this club, which includes among its activities lectures, discussion groups on religious, philosophic and psychological topics, courses on Italian art and culture, exchange lessons etc. Facilities also exist for residence, excursions, sports. For further information, write, at the above address, to Dr. Gay, who is already well known among our readers.

The Secretary of the Austrian Council of the World Alliance, Dr. Franz Fischer, recently delivered an address on the " Unitas Christiana " in the Oecumenical Service held in the Old Catholic Church of St. Salvator in Vienna. This address stressed the need for the unity of all Christian churches by which alone the misery and distraction of the world can be overcome.

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[1] Director of the " Geneva Research Center " and editor of the review " Geneva ", chairman of the Consultative Group of International Organisation interested in disarmament.

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

RUSSIAN FAMINE RELIEF.

The Central Office for Inter-Church Aid, (Dr. A. Keller, 2, rue de Montchoisy, Geneva), has now been officially appointed, both by its international committee, (representing the federations of Protestant Churches everywhere), and by the important German committee for Russian relief, Brüder in Not, as the international centre for relief to starving Russians. Through the agency of the Central Office, hundreds of Christian families in Russia are receiving help every month. The scheme to undertake sponsorship for these families is meeting with success. From the acknowledgments received, it is evident that the parcels forwarded reach their destinations. The severity of the winter makes this misery and starvation all the more tragic and imposes a spirit of responsibility and generosity upon the Christians of other lands.

ASSISTANCE TO ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ.

The Committee for the establishment of the Assyrian Christians of Iraq has had several meetings and has opened negotiations with various governments, with a view to ascertaining whether they could contemplate the establishment on their territory of those of the Assyrians who would wish to go there. Replies from the Governments in question have still to be received.

NEWS OF OTHER OECUMENICAL GROUPS.

The Continuation Committee of the **World Conference on Faith and Order** (Lausanne, 1927), has recently published *The Lausanne Movement : Its Past, Present and Future*, (No. 70 of a series of pamphlets[1]). In it are elaborated the stages reached in the furthering of the movement's aims, which are directed, not at devising schemes for the achievement of Reunion but at providing common ground on which the Churches may meet to explain themselves to one another and to clear away misunderstandings, with a view to Reunion being ultimately arrived at by the Churches themselves. Faith and Order sees the problem of Reunion as requiring " the clear statement and full consideration of those things in which we differ as well as of those things in which we are at one. " Its past and present activities all lead to the realisation of a world conference in 1937 on the general subject of : " The Church in the Purpose of God ", a growing list of delegates to which is already being compiled. For financial reasons, it has not been possible for the Continuation Committee or for the Committee of Theologians to meet since 1931, but steps have been taken to ensure that smaller inter-confessional groups shall meet during this present winter in many parts of the world. The Executive Committee has recommended the study by these local groups of the report produced by the Theologians' Committee on *The Doctrine of Grace* as well as the study of " The Nature and Purpose of the Church " and of " The Sacraments ". Questions forming a discussion basis have been circulated to the groups, with a view to helping the delegates in their preparation for 1937, creating an educated public opinion in the places from which they come and providing indications as to which points of disagreement are felt to be most vital in the different parts of the world. Plans are also being made for the full Continuation Committee to meet again in September of this year. As regards national support of the movement, a Committee of Theologians has been formed in America, under the chairmanship of Dean Willard L. Sperry, of Harvard. In England, the Friends of Reunion, a new organisation closely related to Faith and Order, is actively at work. Meetings have been held in France, in Czecho-Slovakia and elsewhere. In common with the other international Christian organisations, Faith and Order continues to cooperate in all efforts to avoid overlapping and duplication, while fulfilling its own particular task and maintaining its distinctive character.

The International Missionary Council informs us that the results of the enquiry, made in 1932 under the auspices of its Department of Social and Industrial Research (with the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York), into the effect of the Copper Mines of Central Africa upon native society and the work of Christian missions, has now been issued in book form (*Modern Industry and the African*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 12/6d net). This enquiry was concentrated on the copper belt of Northern Rhodesia, and in the where Belgian Congo, mining developments had led to

[1] To be obtained without charge from the Secretariat at Cheyney Court, Winchester, England, or from 111 Fifth Avenue, New York City. U.S.A.

a large influx of native workers and made the question of the impact of European civilisation on native life and the relationship of Christian missions to this impact, a very vital one. The problem was approached from the viewpoints of Sociology, Economics, Government and Religion and valuable light has been thrown on the questions at issue for Missions, Governments and Industrial organisations in the education and transformation of the native life of Central Africa that are involved by such developments.

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The World's Student Christian Federation, has always given special attention to the promotion of a better understanding between East and West. The last session of its executive committee was held in Java in September 1933. Its president, Mr. F. P. Miller, went from there to the Far East on a visit to university students and Christian leaders. The General Secretary, Dr. Visser't Hooft, is concluding a tour of the Dutch East Indies and of India in the interests of the movement. At the invitation of the Swedish branch, an important international study week for students in theology has just been held at Lund (Jan 2-9), on the general theme of : " The Christian Ministry ". Introductions to the subject of " The Conception of the Ministry in the various Churches and Confessions " were given respectively by a Lutheran, a Calvinist, an Orthodox and an Anglican speaker. The Student Christian Movement in New Zealand is particularly concerned with the problem of Christian unity, which has become an important feature in the planning of its camps and study groups.

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The President and General Secretary of the **World's Y.W.C.A.,** Miss van Asch van Wyck and Miss Niven, have also concluded a prolonged stay in the Far East and especially in China. They have met with their national leaders in China, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Malaya, the Philippine Islands and the Dutch East Indies. These contacts have drawn the national Y.W.C.A.'s in these areas much closer, not only to one another, but also to those of other parts of the world. A World Conference planned for 1933 had to be postponed because of the difficult political conditions. In 1930, the World's Y.W.C.A. adopted, (and later incorporated it into its constitution), a resolution specifying their concern for " the development of public opinion on international questions and relationships such as shall strengthen all those forces which are working for the avoidance of war and the promotion of peace and better understanding among the nations. " To further this principle, the exchange of leaders and secretaries is recommended to the national units. A Japanese secretary has recently spent a year on the staff in Australia and New Zealand, and scholarship grants are given to facilitate the interchange of students on an international and intercontinental scale.

BOOK REVIEWS

Recent Books on Political Ethics.

The following brief survey refers principally to some recent German books which are of special interest for the coming oecumenical study conference. In our next issue, a further report will be given, with particular reference to any French and Anglo-American books to which the Research Department has had access.

In his **Grundriss der Ethik** (Foundations of Ethics), (Merkel, Erlangen, 1931. Pages 94-111), P. Althaus gives a well considered, systematic presentation of the questions of interest to us here. The same author has also undertaken a detailed analysis, from the German-Lutheran viewpoint, of some special problems: *Law and the Kingdom of God, Politics and the Kingdom of God, War,* in his book **Staatsgedanke und Reich Gottes** (The Idea of the State and the Kingdom of God), (Bayer, Langensalza, 1931, 125 pages). In the light of pastoral practice, H. Asmussen's **Politik und Christentum,** (Politics and Christianity), (Hanseat. Verlagsanstalt, Hamburg 1933, 187 pages) defines the Christian conception of the State, and the particular service rendered by the Church to the State. E. Brunner, in his great **Entwurf einer protestantisch-theologischen Ethik** (Outline of Protestant Ethics of Theology) (Mohr, Tübingen 1932, pp. 426-469, 645-664), discusses, like Althaus, although from an essentially different point of view, and in opposition not only to the Roman Catholic, but also to the traditional Lutheran conception of the State, the ethical problem of State and politics. In the form of a lecture, **Der Staat als Problem der Kirche** (The State as a Problem of the Church) (Gotthelf, Berne 1933. 20 pages), Brunner has exposed, briefly but clearly, his fundamental attitude. In **Die Kirche Jesu Christi und der Staat** (The Church of Jesus Christ and the State) (Furche-Verlag, Berlin 1933, 227 pages), Fr. Delekats is concerned with a critical discussion of Fr. Gogarten's thesis on political ethics, and specially with his conception of sin, and with Carl Schmitt's conception of the State in **Der Begriff des Politischen** (The Idea of Politics). In **God, Man and Society** (S.C.M. Press, London, 1933, pages 94-185) V. A. Demant examines, from a characteristically Anglo-Catholic viewpoint, the ethical problem of the Christian citizen, the Christian problem of inter-

nationalism, etc. On the attitude of Luther and traditional Lutheranism to the question of nation and state, W. Ehlerts' work on **Morphologie des Luthertums** (Vol. 11 : Soziallehren und Sozialwirkungen des Luthertums. Beck. München, 1932, 554 pages) is very informative. A noteworthy contribution to our subject is made by Fr. Gogartens in his **Politische Ethik** (Political Ethics) (Diederichs, Jena 1932, 220 pages), which, taking sin as the central point, attempts to find a theological basis for the Lutheran ethics of the State. H. Knittermeyer, in two books, **Die Grenzen des Staates** (The Limitations of the State), (Runge, Berlin 1932. 64 pages) and **Staat und Mensch** (State and Man), (Winter, Bremen 1931, 136 pages), has elucidated some of the questions of particular interest for the oecumenical study conference : the limitation of the State through the Church and through human personality. The collection published by W. Künneth and H. Schreiner, **Die Nation vor Gott** (The Nation Before God), (Wichern-Verlag, Berlin 1933, 449 pages), contains articles by different authors on the Lutheran theological foundations of an ethics of politics, on the State and the general community, on national and racial problems and on modern ethnical religious movements in Germany, etc. In several books, A. de Quervain has given a comprehensive theological-critical presentation of the principal religious and secular political types of thought, and also studies on the Christian conception of the State. Working from the same general basis as V. A. Demant, M. B. Reckitt, in **Faith and Society** (Longmans, London 1932, pages 235-302) discusses political and international problems. H. Sasse, studies a special problem of importance in **Vom Sinn des Staates** (The Nature of the State), (Runge, Berlin 1932, 70 pages), in which he seeks to re-establish the doctrine of authority. The increase of nationalism in the world of today is examined from the Christian point of view by E. Shillito in **Nationalism : Man's Other Religion** (S.C.M. Press. London 1933, 142 pages). An attempt, on a German-Lutheran basis, to find a theological foundation for nationalism, is made by W. Stapel in **Der christliche Staatsmann** (The Christian Statesman. Hanseat. Verlangsanstalt, Hamburg 1932. 275 pages). The series of lectures by W. Temple, the present Archbishop of York, on **Christianity and the State** (MacMillan, London 1928. 198 pages), provides an insight into the English conception of this whole group of questions.

The Story of the Student Christian Movement, by Dr. Tissington Tatlow, (Student Christian Movement Press, London), 1933. 12-6d net. 960 pages.

This book will be of direct interest to all who are concerned with the impact of Christianity on world order. For those who have shared in the life of the movement, it will be a " golden book " of cherished memories. The story of a movement which began fifty years ago and contains today nearly thirteen thousand members in the British Universities, it reveals the marked changes in student trends of thought, the evolution and broadening of the aim and base of the movement, its growing interest in the Church and in the social and political problems of our time. It is the record of a British movement, but one related to, and increasingly interested in, the world-wide fellowship of which it is an integral and influential part, the World's Student Christian Federation.

The personal element, the touch of humour and, here and there, of emotion, when the author sketches the life of some of those who have left their mark on the movement, disclose the unique place that he has occupied in leadership for over thirty years. The book forms an important contribution to contemporary religious history. It shows in a striking manner — and this is true in other countries also — the part that the movement has played in promoting oecumenical activity in the Churches, by bringing together on its platforms and in its membership leading churchmen of different denominations, and then through student conferences, which have paved the way for important international conferences. In speaking of the earlier Student Movement retreats for theological students, Dr. Tatlow writes that " a number of the men who appeared as representatives of the British Churches at the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927 received their initial impetus to work for unity, and their first training in understanding the questions at issue, at these theological retreats ". It was in the Federation and in the British Movement that the International Missionary Council found its initiators and present leaders. The history of the Movement during the War and after reveals attitudes and declarations which must give courage to those who fear that the younger generations are drifting towards narrow nationalism. " The Call to Battle ", issued to the universities in 1919 is as true today as it was then, and it contains the following paragraph : " We have found in working with students of other nations and races a unity in Christ which overcomes prejudice and enriches the common life. Before God and in Christ we are all one. We are convinced that this unity is the only sure hope of peace and of the true development of nations. Now is the time to do all in our power to create a public opinion that shall constrain statesmen to act on this belief. "

Ekklesia : Surveys on Church Life of Today, edited by Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze, (Leopold Klotz, Gotha. Subscription price : 50 Pfennig per signature of 16 pages).

Of special value and interest for oecumenical work is the above series of booklets, a leaflet concerning which was included in our last issue. The author of each volume is a member of the Church in question, and not an outside observer, and the whole scheme will undoubtedly contribute to the promotion of mutual understanding between the different confessions. Subscriptions to the series are earnestly invited.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN PRESS AND INFORMATION SERVICE

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